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Notes of the Week

On Both Fronts

THE Carpathians and St. Mihiel are the outstanding points of immediate interest. Russia's magnificent work has been so far effective that the Germans have been forced to send large bodies of troops to the assistance of Austria. It is said that no fewer than seven German army corps have been dispatched to check the Russian advance, and that the Kaiser himself has gone to take a hand in directing operations, as though that were not a guarantee rather of failure than success! As, according to high German opinion, Russia is already showing signs of having taken on a task too big for her, we may assume that her achievements have been even greater than we know. With the Germans nothing fails so surely as the successes of the Allies. On the Western frontier our Allies have steadily progressed north-east and south-east of St. Mihiel; for the Germans, who are holding on to St. Mihiel with grim determination, the French are getting perilously near Thiaucourt, which is on the direct line of retreat to Metz, and we can only wonder how much farther they will be allowed to go before the enemy clear out. A French triumph here will do more to bring realities home to the obtuse German mind than perhaps anything else save the actual invasion of Germany itself.

German Propaganda

Germany is letting her temper get the better of her discretion. She has now taken to lecturing the United States on neutrality, and has charged America with supporting England's violations of international law. America, it seems, is sending us munitions of war, whilst not insisting on her right to send Germany food. The puerility of the argument is equalled only by its impertinence. It affords America an opportunity of understanding the methods of German propaganda. The American Press is very angry, and demands that Count Bernstorff should be given his passports. Germany's rectitude and innocent purpose are truly astonishing. General von Bernhardt has come out again in his own and his country's defence, and he makes out a case which, with those who can forget his writings and the moral of "Britain as Germany's Vassal," may carry some weight. The *Evening News*, we are sorry to see, has given Bernhardt's reply to his critics special publicity. Bernhardt's second thoughts are flatly contrary of his first in many essential respects,

and for the man-in-the-street who knows him not, put a gloss on German action which is mischievously untrue. Bernhardt now complains that he has been mistranslated and misrepresented. Unfortunately for him and his kind, the original writings are still available.

British Prisoners in Germany

No doubt remains as to the ill-treatment of British prisoners in Germany. Sir Edward Grey says the reports are corroborated from many independent sources. At least Germany might understand that British prisoners are entitled to the considerations which she demands on behalf of her pirates! Scandalous as the whole thing is, Germany is now instituting her reprisals on innocent British officers because the British Government refuse to honour her captured submarine officers and crew. Germany simply does not understand what humanity means. And Dr. Lyttelton and his friends plead that there must be no humiliation! British blood boils at the infamies she heaps on all who stand in her way. Sir A. Conan Doyle is right; the British soldier will realise that it is better to die than to be taken prisoner, and that means desperation added to normal British courage. Germany will find the addition costly.

Kitchener, the Great Human

An intensely interesting because intensely simple and human character sketch of Lord Kitchener the Man appears in *Lippincott's* from the pen of Mr. C. S. Cooper, the American writer. Lord Kitchener in the flesh he found, as have so many others, quite different from Lord Kitchener, the cold, calculating martinet of the imagination. Mr. Cooper entered Lord Kitchener's presence prepared to "curl up like a caterpillar on a hot shovel." He was instantly reassured. His greeting was marked by that subtle, indefinable something, gained neither in books nor on battlefields, "that marks a gentleman-born the whole world around." The interview took place in Cairo, and Lord Kitchener's love for and interest in the people committed to his charge was of that practical, manly, but not sentimental kind for which Mr. Cooper was admittedly not prepared. Mr. Cooper was so profoundly impressed by the unostentatious character of the man and his surroundings, utterly unlike anything he had anticipated, that he cannot even remember what the furniture of the room was. He found in Lord Kitchener not a glorified drill-sergeant but "a great Englishman, a great human, who not only could serve with resistless exactitude, but could also care as he served."

Circumstances Alter Cases

It would be difficult to throw the case of Mr. Robert Ross, the man of letters, the tribute to whom we dealt with last week, into sharper relief than by reference to the case of Mrs. John Chapman, the widow of the founder of the *Westminster Review*. For Mr. Robert Ross a testimonial is signed by the Prime Minister and others, and £700, which he does not want, are subscribed. Mrs. Chapman, eighty-two years of age, is in Hammersmith Workhouse. The *Nation* has done

good service in drawing attention to this wholly scandalous matter. Possibly Mrs. Chapman's privations were unknown to the Prime Minister and others so ready to rush to the assistance of "a man of letters," the value of whose contributions to letters strikes us as in inverse ratio to the value of the contributions on his behalf. Mrs. Chapman's troubles are, at any rate, known now, thanks to Mrs. Cobden-Sanderson (of 319, St. James Court, S.W.), and the sooner steps are taken to ensure her modest old-age comforts the better for our self-respect, common sense, and common humanity.

The Reviewer's Craft

THE name of Mr. Robert Lynd as an authority on matters journalistic is unfortunately unfamiliar to us. He bursts upon us in the *British Review* this month, and we ought, no doubt, to be deeply impressed by the profundity of his thoughts on the whole art and practice of the not always gentle, and more often incompetent, commentator on other people's books. It is said that everybody writes books nowadays; those who do not write them review them. If Mr. Lynd would frankly tell us that a good many so-called reviewers ought never to have been allowed to take up the rôle of guide, philosopher, and friend to a public which wants to know something about a book before it buys or orders from the library, he would achieve in a phrase what he takes many pages to suggest. His idea of a critic is amusing: "The critic on the Press is a news-gatherer as surely as the man who is sent to describe a public meeting or a strike." Could absurdity be put into neater form? Mr. Lynd's idea of the rôle of the critic is eminently flattering—to the reporter.

It is, of course, the critic's function to be judge rather than reporter. The real trouble is the unfitness of most would-be critics to sit in judgment on anything save, perhaps, the weight avoirdupois of a particular volume. How they ever induce editors to accept them as literary appraisers is one of the mysteries. We know what Disraeli, Coleridge, Shelley, and others who have suffered said of this "most stupid and malignant race." Mr. Lynd is of opinion that the mediocre quality of most reviews is due to a wrong conception of what a book review should be. We agree. Book reviewing is too frequently the merest hackwork of men who could not, to save their lives, write the book on which with anonymous assurance they dare to sit in judgment. Mr. Lynd contends that a review should contain a portrait of a book—obviously a conception that could only be realised if every reviewer were an artist capable of the very finest vignette work. "A critical portrait of a book by Mr. Le Queux may be amazingly alive; a censorious comment can only be dull." Where, we wonder, does Mr. Lynd get that notion? A censorious comment, improper though it be, is very often the liveliest of lively things. Said Byron:

A man must serve his time to every trade
Save censure—critics all are ready made.

Yet, if there had been no critics, the gaiety of letters

and the resources of poetry would have been poorer to the extent of "English Bards and Scotch Reviewers."

However, let us accept it that a portrait of a book rather than criticism is the desideratum. Mr. Lynd thinks the comparison of a review to a portrait fixes attention on what he regards as one essential quality of a book-review. "A reviewer should never forget his responsibility to his subject. He must allow nothing to distract him from his main task of setting down the features of his book vividly and recognisably. One may say this even while admitting that the most delightful book-reviews of modern times—for the literary causeries of Anatole France may fairly be classified under book-reviews—were the revolt of an escaped angel against the limitations of a journalistic form." Anatole France is, of course, a genius, and genius, Mr. Lynd concedes, justifies any method. "In the hands of a pinchbeck Anatole France, how unendurable the review conceived as a causerie would become! Anatole France observes that 'all books in general, and even the most admirable, seem to me infinitely less precious for what they contain than for what he who reads puts into them.' That, in a sense, is true. But no reviewer ought to believe it. His duty is to his author: whatever he 'puts into' him is a subsidiary matter. 'The critic,' says Anatole France again, 'must imbue himself thoroughly with the idea that every book has as many different aspects as it has readers, and that a poem, like a landscape, is transformed in all the eyes that see it, in all the souls that conceive it.' Here he gets nearer the idea of criticism as portraiture, and practically every critic of importance has been a portrait-painter. In this respect Sainte-Beuve is at one with Macaulay, Pater with Matthew Arnold, Anatole France (occasionally) with Mr. Henry James. They may portray authors rather than books, artists rather than their works, but this only means that criticism at its highest is a study of the mind of the artist as reflected in his art." In other words, Mr. Lynd asks us to believe that the best book-reviews deal not with the book, but the author!

Mr. Lynd's ideal review would make a call on the reviewer to which it is quite certain that very few are equal, and fewer still would care to respond. A reviewer must, he says, judge a book by the standard which the author aims at reaching. He must not, like a destroying angel, career about among books that do not pretend to be literature. Why not? Why, if a work is obviously bad, not stamp it as such? The only question is, is the critic competent to judge? We are reminded that Anatole France defined criticism as a record of the soul's adventures among masterpieces. "Reviewing, alas!" says Mr. Lynd, "is for the most part the record of the soul's adventures among books that are the reverse of masterpieces." Surely in these adventures we have the true critic's opportunity. Mr. Lynd hates generalisation; his own generalising does not go far to prove that his hate is ill-found. His review of the reviewer makes amusing reading to those who know something of the craft: but it will advance

nothing. The artist among reviewers—and there are quite a number—will continue to do good work; the hack and the man or woman who reviews merely to pass the time and add a few extra shillings, maybe pounds, to the weekly income will go on doing work indifferent or worse. Mr. Lynd's little lecture will not affect them because they either do not understand, or, if they understand, do not care. Only an editor with Mr. Lynd's ideals will make them care, and in that event the reviewing staff would be one specially disciplined—a luxury which some papers still enjoy.

The Truth About Night Clubs

BY LUCIUS

THE fanatic, like the average woman, never seems to mind hitting a man when he is down. Those who hoped that the great calamity which has befallen us would shame anti-vivisectionists, anti-inoculationists, little Navyites, little Englanders, and others of like kidney, into silence and a cessation of activity, have been doomed to bitter disappointment. The anti-inoculationists, to take one glaring example, have surpassed themselves since war began, and have succeeded in inflicting untold hardship, not only on individual soldiers, but on the entire regiments to which they belong. And all the other cranks seem equally to be taking advantage of the nation's misfortune to run their various propaganda more vigorously than ever. It is a triumph for Leagues of Long Faces. Only in war-time could the latest and most evil of the many agitations against harmless amusement—the outcry against the night clubs—have been tolerated. In this agitation, those clubs which are as well conducted as the Savoy or the Carlton are the ones most severely affected (because they are the only ones which count), and the class of people who suffer by the persecution is the class which most deserves its good time—soldiers back from the front.

In New York, it would be quite a natural hypothesis to conclude that the movement against night clubs, recently got up by our popular divines, had been engineered by financiers interested in the white slave traffic, for the purpose of increasing business. It is only in a country like our own that the cause of evil can be advanced as much by the stupidity of the well-meaning, as it is in others by the deliberate intent of the wicked. As a nation we love to abuse the things

we know nothing about. The very name "night club" is calculated to make a bishop or a fashionable preacher faint with horror. It positively reeks of sin, to certain sorts of noses. The kind of people who listen to the denunciations of ill-informed clergymen have the sort of nose, and are ready and eager to rush into the fray. Oblivious of the fact that our Piccadilly and Regent Street parades—which have been a public scandal in the metropolis for generations and are a by-word throughout Europe—go on unrestrained, they must needs fulminate against a number of perfectly well-run establishments, which every man who knows anything of life must realise do more to restrain vice than to encourage it. These clubs, which those who frequent the best of them know to be as orderly as any first-class restaurant, have been persecuted by our grandmotherly legislators, apparently because they are open late at night, and because they allow the officer who is back from the trenches for a few days' leave to have a little enjoyment. One wonders what Father Bernard Vaughan and others imagine goes on in the places of which they are so prodigal in abuse. But, still more, one wonders if they think that if the night clubs were closed the officers back on ninety-six hours' leave would go to bed at ten after a night-cap of beef-tea. Do they imagine that the result of closing the night clubs will be universal sobriety? If they do, we can only say that such crass ignorance of human nature is hardly likely to make them any good at helping others.

What actually takes place in a good night club is certainly very different from the unbridled orgie which fashionable preachers would have us imagine. The great majority of people who go to them spend a harmless evening of healthy amusement and exercise. Instead of going "on the loose" in questionable company, perhaps falling in with one of the harpies of Piccadilly and drinking very inferior drinks, the young officer who goes to a night club after the play, with the friend of his choice, is under the eye all the time of women of his own class. Even if he wished to be intemperate—and the suggestion is a characteristic libel of the Prohibitionists—he would be restrained by this fact quite as much as by the strictness of the Club authorities. Whatever he drinks, though, I admit, ruinously expensive, is the best of its kind; the surroundings are charming; and after dancing hard to the music of an excellent band he will be healthily tired and quite ready for bed at the end of the evening.

Human nature, sad as it may appear, will never be altered by cranks and old women. The men who have suffered months of misery and discomfort in the

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trenches, when they come home will insist on having what they consider a good time, no matter what preventive legislation is passed. They will want good food and wine; they will want to stay up late and to enjoy the society of charming girls. If anyone deserves these pleasures in war-time surely it is the men home from the battlefield for an all too short holiday.

If the cranks have their way and the night clubs are closed we may be quite sure that the attractions of Piccadilly will remain open. Whatever may be our qualities as a nation, we are certainly not consistent!

The Romance of the Flower Stall

THE Londoner is chiefly made aware of Spring by artificial means. He sees certainly the almond-trees gleaming pink against the cold grey skies, and in occasional favoured spots the green of daffodils and tulips pushing its way bravely up to the rare sun-rays, but his real sensations of Spring, of its colour and warmth and gladness, are evoked by the millinery of West End windows and the glowing fragrance of flower shops and stalls in the still wintry streets. The primroses that he sees are not growing in country hedge-rows, side by side with the sweet blue violet, or hanging in dainty profusion over the streams of budding cosses, musical with the song of birds; they are in prim bunches in the basket of a hawker of doubtful cleanliness; the daffodils, the real Lent lilies that the country children love to pick, stand crushed in masses in unsympathetic jars instead of blowing in a pale gold sheet on the open slope of a southern wood, nodding a thousand heads as the wind sweeps over them, turning their spikes to silver and back again to softest green. In exchange for these joys he has the whole romance of Spring compressed into the glowing mass of colour that we call a flower-stall.

There is such a one that has for background a gaunt grey church against whose ancient rails are propped boxes of gorgeous blooms, tier above tier, the lowest resting on the well-worn stones of an alley running at right angles to the street; whether the owner has a fine eye to the value of contrasts, or the situation be merely the accident of a tacit permission to use the quiet corner, is open to doubt, but the result is entire gratification to the eye of the passer-by, and, to judge from appearances, an equal prosperity to the seller.

Here in the open street, pleasantly sheltered from biting winds, bloom the treasures of the Spring from southern lands, from scented islands, from home cottage gardens. Sheaves of carnations, pink and crimson, spikes of Easter lilies of almost unearthly whiteness, roses so red and vivid as scarcely to look like nature, masses of violets, of anemones of every hue, intermingle with tulips in their bravery of gold and vermillion, with windflowers scarlet as the heart of flame, primroses and daffodils, waving sprays of feathery mimosa, wilting somewhat in the cold and speaking pathetically of other and warmer suns; on

the flagstones beneath stand pots of growing things, hyacinths in endless profusion and colouring, sending forth waves of perfume as arresting as their colour. As a picture it is beautiful, as a page from the scrap-book of the Spring it is enthralling. Roses and carnations, mimosa and anemones, great scented violets—all are ambassadors from the spring of the South, where white roads run through palm-trees beside seas of sapphire, under skies equally blue and radiant, where golden sunshine warms cheeks and hearts. There is a hint of its spicy fragrance in their perfume, something heavy and indolent, that has in it the magic of the South, of a spring that will turn later, to arid heat, to scorching suns and dried-up vegetation, but which in its flowering time is a veritable paradise.

The tulips take us inevitably to Holland, to low-lying lands between placid canals and reed-fringed dykes, where they grow in serried battalions, erect and precise as an army, tended by Dutch boys and women in ample garments and wooden shoes oddly in consonance with the landscape and the growing flowers. Prim as their country, we say, and then remember with a swift sense of wonder their origin in the low green valleys of the Himalayas, softly sloping to the sun beneath snow-clad peaks, and in springtime gay with a carpet of tulips, for which we have no match in Western lands. To us of all flowers they seem most formal, associated with the parterres, the clipped hedges and borders of the tended garden; nevertheless, they come from the most ancient of nations, the centre of mystery and the cradle of civilisation. As they are the army of bulbdom, the gallant brigade in scarlet and gold, the hyacinths, heavy with perfume and dressed in the colours of the rainbow, are the fine ladies of the land, their show the most imposing of all the flowers of Spring. Again it is a far cry from the magnificence of royal blue, of sulphur and salmon, of every shade of rose of which painter's palette is capable—blooms curled and double, single and variegated—to the simple beauty of their origin, the humble bluebell of the countryside that soon will turn the undergrowth of innumerable cosses into seas of living azure, with here and there a snow-white bloom to give credence to the relationship. Some there are, in virtue of such sights, who wonder if culture, increasing as it does size and magnificence, adds to beauty!

The varieties of narcissus, standing in great sheaves in jars and boxes in a bewildering choice of shape and colouring, come from the Scilly Isles, and from the fields of France left untrodden by the grim foot of war. While bitter winds and grey skies are our portion, they blossom by acres in these fortunate isles, tended chiefly by the kindly sun and soft sea-breezes. There is one kind which beyond all other flowers is the spirit of the Spring, the *Narcissus poeticus*, poised like a white butterfly on its slender stem, its fragrance delicate as its own wistful loveliness of contour. This is the flower around which tradition plays lovingly. Narcissus, the beautiful Greek youth, was beloved by Echo, but after the rapture consequent on seeing his own beauty in a pool he became blind to any other

charms, and at last sank into his own embrace in the deep still water that reflected it, preferring oblivion to the pain of being separated from the vision. In sorrow that such beauty should be eternally lost, the Earth God suffered his fair flesh to spring up again each year in the shape of a flower, of white and pure gold, that loves to linger for a few brief days still on the margin of woodland pools, to see reflected its fragile beauty in the cool, clear mirror of the water, and then to sink back into the bosom of the earth. To-day the narcissus glows in its myriads in our streets in company with the daffodil of the orchard, the "hundreds and thousands" or "butter and eggs" of the cottage garden, linking the ancient with the modern, poetry of old with the horticulture of to-day, bringing romance into the prosaic business element of the London flower-stall.

REVIEWS

Napoleon at His Worst

Napoleon in Exile at St. Helena. By NORWOOD YOUNG. (London: Stanley Paul. 2 Vols. 32s. net.)

TIME so far modifies historic perspective that it is by no means certain posterity is able to judge events a century old with fairness to all parties concerned. Much controversy there has been about Napoleon's treatment on the Island of St. Helena, and much there will doubtless continue to be. Historians who look at all the questions involved in Napoleon's exile, from the calm standpoint of the library, and do not keep constantly in mind what Napoleon had been to England and Europe for years before Waterloo, who think of him only as a fallen giant and forget that he was a veritable ogre to our great grandfathers, cannot possibly take a judicial view of his complaints or of the attitude towards them of the British Government and Sir Hudson Lowe. Napoleon, the genius which carried him to a throne notwithstanding, was an adventurer, and an adventurer of an unprincipled type. He achieved greatness only to abuse it, and his escape from Elba, with all its consequences, was in itself sufficient to warrant the most drastic, even humiliating, conditions when once he was again a prisoner. There has been a vast deal too much false sentiment wasted over Napoleon; if he had been as great a man in other directions as he was in the field, if he had not allowed vaulting ambition so far to o'erleap itself that disaster was inevitable, Europe would have been spared more than one tragedy and Napoleon would have established a higher claim to our admiration. Mr. Norwood Young has rendered a fine service to history by his exhaustive and patient examination of all the papers and documents bearing on the miserable years from 1815 to 1821. With such a mass of material to sift and collate, it is not, perhaps, altogether remarkable that he should have fallen into some errors of minor

importance. They do not affect the value of the work as a whole.

For the first time the public is in possession of evidence enabling it to form a more trustworthy opinion on Napoleon's last days, on the men who were directly associated with him at Longwood, and on the Governor whose character and conduct have been so much misrepresented by Napoleonic partisans. Never, perhaps, had a man a more difficult office than that of Sir Hudson Lowe. Napoleon was little better than a snarling brute, and his entourage naturally made it their business to lend colour to his grievances. If Napoleon had been a different sort of person, Lowe would not have been the ideal Governor, but, when the charges against him are examined with the minute care which Mr. Young bestows on them, it may, we think, be said that Lowe comes out of the ordeal with credit. It was a terribly sore point with Napoleon that his imperial rôle was no longer recognised when he was a prisoner. He resented being called "General Bonaparte," and imagined that honours which Europe had bestowed Europe could not take away. The chances are that, if he had fallen into other hands than England's, he would have lost not merely honours but life. When he was a fugitive he was keenly alive to the fate which awaited him if the Prussians secured his person. He would give himself up only to England, and apparently he believed that he would find not merely asylum in England itself but homage and emolument. Napoleon had just reason for complaint on some grounds, but his intolerant and sulky attitude often made it impossible to do anything for him. He invented or imagined all sorts of wrongs, and his creatures in Europe, like Gourgaud, endeavoured to enlist sympathy for him by the most shameless fabrications as to Lowe's brutality. "Napoleon," wrote Gourgaud to the Tsar Alexander, "has been placed under the guard of a man whose sole occupation it is to invent every day some new restriction or humiliation. In short, sire, it is by pin-pricks that they are killing, while they keep him in irons, the man to conquer whom the whole of Europe in coalition had not too many armies." There was no insult too great for Napoleon to heap on the Governor, and certain people even in England came to believe that Lowe was wantonly inconsiderate, whilst, of course, the party politicians had their own ends to serve, so that Lowe was not allowed to vindicate himself. Sir Hudson Lowe, it may safely be said, was an angel of light compared with what Napoleon himself would have been, had he been master in similar circumstances. His suspicions, however unwarranted, were not wholly unnatural in one with his record. Mr. Young says:—

Napoleon protested over and over again that it was Lowe's object to poison him, or drive him to suicide, or worry him to death. This was not all pretence; for—it has to be said—Napoleon himself would not have allowed so powerful an enemy, whose mere existence was an unnecessary menace, to continue to live. When the Duc d'Enghien had been put to death, Napoleon observed that he wished people to understand of what he was capable. He repeated the lesson

until there was no mistaking it. Napoleon was a Corsican of the eighteenth century. What more natural than to have supposed his enemies would take what he would himself have regarded as the only sensible course!

One of the most pathetic documents in this book is the letter addressed by Napoleon's mother to the Sovereigns of Europe. The poor woman no doubt believed that the stories of Lowe's malignity were true. We cannot help wondering what the feelings of the monarchs of Europe were when they read this appeal:—

Sires,—A mother, afflicted beyond all expression, has long cherished the hope that the meeting of your Imperial and Royal Majesties will afford some alleviation of her distress.

The prolonged captivity of the Emperor Napoleon gives occasion for appealing to you. It is impossible but that your magnanimity, your power, and the recollection of past events should induce your Imperial and Royal Majesties to interest yourselves for the deliverance of a Prince, who has had so great a share in your regard and even in your friendship.

Would you suffer to perish, in miserable exile, a Sovereign who, relying on the magnanimity of his enemy, threw himself into his power? My son might have demanded an asylum from the Emperor, his father-in-law; he might have consigned himself to the generosity of the Emperor Alexander, of whom he was once the friend; he might have taken refuge with his Prussian Majesty, who in that case would no doubt have recollected his old alliance. Should England punish him for the confidence which he reposed in her?

The Emperor Napoleon is no longer to be feared. He is infirm. And even if he were in the full enjoyment of health, and had the means which Providence once placed in his hands, he abhors civil war.

Sires, I am a mother, and my son's life is dearer to me than my own. Pardon my grief, which prompts me to take the liberty of addressing this letter to your Imperial and Royal Majesties.

Do not render unavailing the entreaties of a mother who thus appeals against the cruelties that have so long been exercised towards her son.

In the name of Him who is the essence of goodness, and of whom your Imperial and Royal Majesties are the image, I entreat that you will interest yourselves in putting a period to my son's misery, and restore him to liberty. For this I implore God, and I implore you who are His lieutenants on earth.

Reasons of State have their limits; and prosperity, which gives immortality, loves above all things the generosity of conquerors.

I am, etc.,

MADAME MÈRE.

The Tsar Alexander took the lead, with crushing logic, in answering this epistle, and, whilst showing that the character of the laws of England exposed the calumnies, pointed out that Napoleon's captivity would have been less painful if he had seen his way to "renounce his pretensions to grandeur and to exactions incompatible with his situation and the actual state of his fortune." That is the whole secret. Mr. Young lays it pitilessly bare. The book with its illustrations is an absolute mine of information on the tragi-comedy of the final phase.

Two Poets and their Prose

Essays in Criticism. By MATTHEW ARNOLD. Second Series. (Macmillan and Co. 1s. net.)

Selected Prose Works of Shelley. With Foreword by H. S. SALT. (Watts and Co. 9d. net.)

THE assertion that a sound philosophy immeasurably increases the value of a poet's work, made by Matthew Arnold of Wordsworth, is a tempting subject for debate, and we believe that the "ayes" would win were it put to the trial, in spite of all the music-makers whose fame rests more on melody than on moral ideas beautifully expressed. It was a permanent, vital truth that led Meredith to write:—

I bleed, but her who wounds I will not blame.
Have I not felt her heart as 'twere my own
Beat thro' me? could I hurt her? heaven and hell!
But I could hurt her cruelly!

Here, as in a hundred verses that might be quoted from any great poet of humanity, thought inspires above all mere music; the sharp pang of instant recognition, half a pain, half an intense pleasure, gives at one thrust the knowledge of high, clear regions beyond the sweetness of clever rhyme.

It follows that a basis of sound philosophy, discovered, perhaps, as we penetrate the prose work of a poet, must also have its value; but the whole argument turns upon our interpretation of the word "sound," and, in considering Shelley's essays, we hear, now and then, the hollow ring which tells of no solidity or great strength beneath. Of Byron, Goethe said: "The moment he begins to reflect, he is a child"—piercing criticism of a poet, indeed! With some reason the remark can be applied to Shelley. His "Refutation of Deism" is unsatisfactory and confused; he is possessed by a fine, fearsome intolerance in his "Letter to Lord Ellenborough," even though he is actually pleading the cause of tolerance; and his reputation as an atheist is shaken by many admirable passages in his "Essay on Christianity," which, we aver, no convinced atheist could have penned—"We do not believe," said Francis Thompson, "that a truly corrupted spirit can write consistently ethereal poetry." "What years of labour, what study and comparison, are needed to bring the critical judgment to maturity!" wrote Amiel of Sainte Beuve; and it is impossible to avoid wondering what Shelley would have made of his doubts and defiances had he lived to a riper, more coolly reflective age. No comfortable couch of a pleasant, confident faith would have been his; he would ever have realised in himself that some souls are preserved from death by their very fighting with doubt; but he might have learned to look with a kindlier eye upon the historical evidences that enraged him, and his resentment against other points of view might have changed as he grew capable of perceiving them. "Shelley's asserting a thing vehemently does not prove more than that he chose to believe it and did believe it . . . his power of persuading himself was equal to any occasion," said Matthew Arnold; and we have only to read these stormy essays to feel what a dangerous power it was—sincerity uncurbed by

reason being then, as now, one of life's frequent, most interesting and occasionally vexatious problems. He was in truth the "beautiful and ineffectual angel, beating in the void his luminous wings in vain." He ranted sometimes, but was ignoble never.

It was in his exquisite "Defence of Poetry" that Shelley's unspoiled self was shown; it is a gem one may continually turn to the light, catching new gleams and colours at every handling, and its definitions of poetry, if vague and often copious, are certainly more fascinating and inspiriting than Matthew Arnold's rather tiresomely repeated "criticism of life" theory. Hear him, as he thrills to his superb theme:—

All high poetry is infinite; it is as the first acorn, which contained all oaks potentially. Veil after veil may be undrawn, and the inmost naked beauty of the meaning never exposed. A great poem is a fountain for ever overflowing with the waters of wisdom and delight; and after one person and one age has exhausted all of its divine effluence which their peculiar relations enable them to share, another and yet another succeeds, and new relations are ever developed, the source of an unforeseen and an unconceived delight.

To such heights Matthew Arnold never reached; in Shelley's pages, after the slow, almost laboured introductory passages, we see the splendours which charmed the senses of Francis Thompson, the resemblances of spirit which brought atheist and Catholic into magnificent union across the gulf of seventy years.

Arnold, however, reasoned closely, impressively, and formed his opinions wisely; his prose is the prose of a scholar. In his poetry, with its peculiar beauty of solemnity, anxiety, and sadness, his doubts never rose to the tumult of Shelley's; in his prose his criticism was orderly and restrained. We picture him treading delicately—a shade too delicately—among the problems of his age. It is difficult to resist the impression, sometimes, that admirable though he was, with all the attributes which go to make a definite type of Englishman—serenity, gravity, tone, style—he was too gentle, hardly searching enough, in his criticism. One of his best literary essays—that on Wordsworth—is reprinted in the volume before us; its qualities of analysis and selection are notable; and the discourse on "The Study of Poetry" may well be read with Shelley's "Defence" as an example of the widely different ways in which two powerful and independent intellects may deal with a theme. In these little books, which we have taken together because, in spite of obvious variations, there is yet a critical outlook in which they focus distinctly, with a perfectly visible relation to one another, the student will find far more material for his imagination and research than we have been able here to indicate. It is by the constant exercise of contrast and comparison that the critic is stimulated, and between the riotous melodies of Shelley and the grave harmonies of the later poet lie exceptional opportunities for minds that are thoughtful, observant, and discriminating.

Mr. John Lane will publish next week "Carillons of Belgium and Holland," by W. Gorham Rice.

Garden and Woodland

The Garden Under Glass. By W. F. ROWLES. (Grant Richards. 6s. net.)

Every Woman's Flower Garden. By MARY HAMPDEN. (Herbert Jenkins. 5s. net.)

Woodland Trees and How to Identify Them. By J. H. CRABTREE. (Charles H. Kelly. 1s. net.)

A Chaplet of Herbs. By FLORENCE HINE. (G. Routledge. 2s. 6d. net.)

BOOKS on gardening are as various and as numerous as opinions on gardening. With the increase of the interest in horticulture, the demand for specialised treatises has become great. "The Garden Under Glass" is an admirable example of a really useful book on a special subject; the greenhouse itself and suitable flowers receive adequate treatment, but the space given to cucumbers and melons would have been better amplified. Mention is not even made of the elusive canteloupe, which so few English gardeners attempt to grow, notwithstanding the yearly challenge we receive when the French crop matures.

"Every Woman's Flower Garden" is deficient in many ways. It is not as good as the five colour plates by Mary S. Reeve would at first sight make it appear; or is it that we are backsliding? The chapter "Beautiful Borders and Beautiful Bedding-out" makes us feel twenty years younger. Then comes a gladness that we are as old as we are. We must not backslide, despite the author's plea for "the trim mosaic of blossom" backed as it is by the much use of a pair of compasses. We do not want to see design Fig. 59 "reproduced elsewhere," despite "the deviation of outline" which is advised as a means to prevent its exact reproduction. Rightly has carpet bedding been "vetoed as a desecration of nature." That architects have not generally contrived to reduce the stiff angularity of houses is no reason for our perpetuating their sins in our gardens; and no proper analogy can be drawn between trimmed evergreen hedges and carpet beds. The true aim in a garden should be to secure repose freed from monotony. There can be no repose in a "trim mosaic of blossom," and carpet beds do not free a garden from monotony; they are interruptions. Has Mrs. Jekyll lived in vain? The book is unequal. The chapter on prunings and clippings is well set out; that on edgings is unsatisfactory. The one on rockeries is impractical. A suggested source of supply for rockwork is "from among the short herbage on the Sussex Downs," and the means of conveyance of "two or three knobbly lumps" under one's arm, in "brown paper," too, to say nothing of a "fourth" knobbly lump "in the retirement of a bag"—but enough. As one of the irritating proverbs (*sic*) at the end of each chapter says, "It's no use crying over a clouded sun."

"Woodland Trees and How to Identify Them" is a most elementary little book. This should not excuse the neglect to distinguish between the common varieties of the Oak and *Q. Pendunculata* and *Q. Sessiliflora*, or between the Birch, "The Lady of the Woods" (*B. Verucossa*) and her stiff-necked sister (*B. Pubescens*).

"A Chaplet of Herbs" is not a necessity to a gardener, but a luxury. It is a little book of quotations culled from most of the old herbalists. It is well that they are garnered for our delight in so compact a form. If a little paragraph had been added to each herb mentioned on its culture and modern use, it would have supplied a need; but, as we have said, this little volume is a luxury, so garden lovers must needs go off and buy a copy, even though they have to save up again for the seed potatoes.

The Lure of the Sea

Sea Pie. Being More Reminiscences of J. E. PATTERSON. (London: Max Goschen. 7s. 6d. net.)

IN the veins of some it is born, this strange, strong, silent fascination of the sea, from which no hardship, no persuasion, no charm of softer life can turn them. In the pages of Mr. Patterson's book it breathes—created by the atmosphere that only the sailor and sea-lover knows—that exhilaration and thrill caused by the power of the sea, majestic in anger, in the force of the storm; the sense of its personality to the man who lives on its bosom, separated from its spell only by the planks beneath his feet, to whom many times the bed of the sea beckons plain through the foaming waters, covered as it is with the wrecks of gallant ships, with good men's bones, with treasures from the four points of the compass. The interest of these reminiscences lies in the ability of the author to convey these sensations to his reader—the sting of the cold north gale, of ice and sleet and driving rain, the dangers that existed for the trawlers faring forth regularly to supply the fish course for the aristocrat's table in good weather and bad, long before the menace of the submarine and lurking mines were added to their number.

The superstition of the sailor and its apparent justification in the stories told in this book is another feature of the sea familiar to its devotees. The sailor between whom and eternity is the frailest of defences is too near it to scoff at the supernatural, and is a firm believer in omens and warnings and in the coming home of curses to roost on the head of the evil-doer. The ghost-stories included in the book have a touch of the spell of the Ancient Mariner, its eerie, chill inevitableness, and are among the best things contained in it. Were Mr. Patterson's literary gift as great as his spiritual affinity for the sea and all pertaining to it, he would indeed rank as a master of his particular branch of writing; unequal as he is, his work rises at times to the level of real power and dramatic quality. His great gift, however, lies in his power to depict the seafaring man, his character and quality, essentially different from anything known on shore, bred by communion with the sea. There is a restraint and a sensitiveness wedded to his endurance, a capacity for tragedy grafted on to spontaneous humour that are the outcome of a constant sense of danger and of isolation from the mass of men. The book is crammed with story and anecdote; folks from east and west jostle with the

north and south; but through it all, like the sap in the branches of the tree, there runs this constant sense of the lure of the sea, calling and binding to its service eternally those who go down into the great waters.

Fiction

REGINALD AUGUSTUS, a delightfully entertaining small boy of nine, is, quite naturally, the real hero of Mr. Jeffery Farnol's latest story, "The Chronicles of the Imp" (Sampson Low and Co., 3s. 6d.), but his Uncle Dick runs him very close for the honours of that proud position. It is Dick who acts as chronicler, and he records with a lively sense of humour the progress of his own love affair with the Beautiful Lady, which the antics of the Imp, as he fortuitously personates the Roman standard-bearer landing through the surf, Robin Hood, or Little John armed to the teeth, an Indian Chief with tomahawk and bow and arrow, and a Rover Bold with the "Jolly Roger" at the masthead of the pirate craft *Black Death*, help in no small degree to bring to a happy conclusion. These fervid make-believes of a child at play are so happily timed, perhaps unconsciously, perhaps deliberately, as utterly to rout the Wrong but Rich Young Man and his ally, the Adverse Aunt, with the result that Uncle Dick, the Right but Poor Young Man, marries the Beautiful Lady, who thereby becomes Auntie Lisbeth, and the happy pair sail away to the Land of Heart's Delight aboard the good ship *Joyful Hope*. Though the plot is slight, and there is nothing very novel about the small boy hero, the story, which is illustrated, possesses a charm that is sure to fascinate those who have not yet forgotten the play hours of their childhood and the "amorous, and fond, and billing" days of their adolescence. As Mr. Clement K. Shorter says in a kindly appreciation of the author and his work, which prefaces the present volume, it is "a simple story with which we may pass a pleasant hour." But, gay and amusing as it is, it is not likely to achieve the success of the author's "The Broad Highway," of which over 600,000 copies have been sold after its rejection by several astute publishers.

"The Secret Flat," by Gertie de S. Wentworth James (Werner Laurie, 6s.), is not exactly intended for the young person, although written by a lady. The heroine, a composer of love lyrics, tells her own story, which is not a pleasant one, for she treats the seventh commandment as though it were the now historical "scrap of paper." With the advent of the war she loses her means of livelihood, her lover leaves for the front, her husband divorces her, the refugee to whom she at last looks for consolation refuses to stay with her, and she finds herself in a truly piteous state. Mrs. Wentworth-James is a robust writer with a shrewd knowledge of human nature, and her study of the woman is a clever one; but we would she had chosen a healthier subject on which to exercise her undoubted talent.

There is nothing very new about "The Endless

Quest," by Mark Somers (T. Fisher Unwin, 6s.); we are most of us living it every day of our lives, until the grave puts a term to our seeking. Tony Darrell goes forth in search of adventure, just like a knight of old, and encounters Joan Fairfax, with whom he spends an idyllic week on the Norfolk Broads. But Joan, although not averse from matrimony, is sufficiently modern and matter-of-fact to require something more than a husband's warm heart to live upon. So Tony continues the quest and goes to the Far West to win a fortune. Letters pass between them, but they are few and far between, and so unsatisfactory that, when Tony returns, still on the quest, he finds Joan married to his dearest friend Culver. The denouement is well worked out, and, on the whole, Mark Somers has written an entertaining story.

As a study of pettiness we commend Mr. Horace Newte's new novel, "A Pillar of Salt" (Chatto and Windus, 6s.). In a sub-title it is labelled "a story of married life," and so it is, but married life in its most deplorable and uninteresting form. A well-meaning but wearisome husband, a vulgar, dissatisfied wife, and a rather contemptible, third-rate lover form the chief characters, and the author deals in a masterly manner with the sordid situation down to the minutest detail. It is all very true, for, no doubt, such people exist; it carries a moral, also, for at last the erring wife "looks back," and her paltry romance is at an end.

Shorter Notices

A Mother's Sacrifice

SHIELDED by anonymity and death, it is perhaps not fair greatly to criticise the work of an author so earnest of purpose, so true in womanly sympathy, as is "The Little Mother Who Sits at Home" (Jack, 3s. 6d. net). Left a widow with a son a few years old, the mother wrote this series of letters, some being actually posted, others penned from the desire of the writer to place her intimate thoughts on paper, to her son as a boy at school, a youth at college, and a young man in town. Through them all breathes a spirit of tender devotion, sacrifice, and unswerving love. To the mother the son represents all she lives for, and to further his interests and to give him the best education, in the worldly acceptance of the term, she refuses to marry again, gives up her home, exists on insufficient food, and finally, on account of not undergoing an operation when it might have saved her life, slips quietly out of an existence not made particularly happy by the one for whom everything was done, every small luxury and many necessities were banished.

It is fortunate that stories in the form of letters are not too frequent an occurrence in the literary world; otherwise, they would be very boring, for it requires a distinctive touch to make them interesting, while in the hands of a poor writer they can be most irritating. In the present instance the picture is very clear; the reader feels that he knows intimately the young son, the anxious mother, "cookie," and a little less of the

one who could only be accepted as a dear friend, although he would willingly have become a second father to the boy on whom all thoughts, all tenderness, were bestowed. The poor mother's love was perhaps not sufficiently tempered with wisdom; hence the unfortunate straying of the youth and her own untimely end; but the book as it stands reveals a woman of a tender spirit and devotion who considered no sacrifice too great, no love too deep, to offer to the one human being for whom she breathed.

Belgium's Poet

Very sombre is the general note of the "Poems of Emile Verhaeren" (Lane, 3s. 6d.) which have been selected and rendered into English by Alma Strettell. The dismal effect of the flat, Flemish countryside under steady rain; the tragedy of a blazing belfry, when the bell falls and buries the old ringer; the snow,

. . . unfruitful and so pale
In wild and vagabond tatters hurled
Through the limitless winter of the world;

these and other depressing themes are treated skilfully; but towards the end there are two or three glimpses of a more cheerful mood. As to the translation, it may be correct—we should like to see the originals—but it does not always make English poetry. Take the first stanza of "Life":—

To see beauty in all, is to lift our own soul
Up to loftier heights than do those who aspire
Through culpable suffering, vanquished desire.
Harsh Reality, dread and ineffable Whole,
Distils her red draught, enough tonic and stern
To intoxicate heads and to make the heart burn.

This is the poorest of stuff, and has no relation whatever to poetry. It takes a poet to translate poetry, and we fear that M. Verhaeren has suffered. There are better things, of course, in the book, and a good idea may be gained of the temperament and outlook of the Belgian poet, but not, we suspect, of his peculiar appeal. A portrait of Verhaeren by Sargent is given as frontispiece.

A Discussion on Style

In a little book curiously entitled "Hark to These Three!" (Elkin Mathews, 1s. 6d.) Mr. Sturge Moore has packed a large number of ideas into a small space, and the process of unpacking undertaken by the reader is a fairly long one, since he is compelled to consider each item as it is handed out. In other words, every page teems with thought-provoking sentences. The form chosen is that of a conversation between three friends on style, and it is beautifully treated. "The tiger with grand inevitability brings down the gazelle"—thus proving that "some acts of cruelty have a witching style." "A Don Juan might magnificently mock at those who think they have established virtue in a permanent form. Keats lies about the nightingale at precisely the right moment with exactly the appropriate frame of mind. Blake's hasty aphorisms often have more charm than Wordsworth could command when he felt most profound." Possibly we may return to the theme in another issue; but for the present it is sufficient to say that in this strange commotion of ideas Mr. Sturge Moore has given food for much thought and for inspiring debate. The whole conception is brilliant, the work of a keen critic whose power of analysis is emphasised by humour.

MOTORING

IN spite of the many restrictions imposed upon motoring at the present time, as a result of military exigencies, the season of 1915 was inaugurated at Eastertide by a very large number of motorists, thousands of private cars making their appearance on the roads for the first time this year. In anticipation of this revival of the pastime, the Automobile Association recently augmented its staff of road patrols, and the utility of these men and the value of their services to motorists during the past week have been amply demonstrated. It is not merely the work they perform for members of the Association which should be recognised. They perform many other duties which may not be noticed by road users, but which, nevertheless, have a great bearing upon the comfort and safety of motorists generally. Out of many instances of special services rendered during the holidays in the way of practical roadside assistance, mention may be made of a patrol who found a motor cyclist stranded with a broken-down machine "nine miles from anywhere." Having satisfied himself that roadside repairs were impossible, the patrol towed the cyclist for nine miles into the nearest town, and did not leave him until he had made all arrangements with the local "A.A." agent for the execution of the necessary repairs. Apart from such services as these, the abilities of the road patrols in rendering efficient "first aid" in cases of accident have been frequently realised by members and road users of all types. Motorists who are desirous of joining the Association for the coming season and benefiting by the manifold advantages of membership in connection with roadside assistance, roadside telephones, free legal defence and advice, touring assistance, etc., are informed that the annual subscriptions are:—Ordinary car members, £2 2s.; light car members, £1 1s.; motor-cycle and cycle-car members, 10s. 6d. The headquarters of the Association are at Fanum House, Whitcomb Street, Piccadilly, W.

We have received from Messrs. Napier and Son, Ltd., a copy of their "Alpine Souvenir"—a descriptive account of the historical "Storming of the Alps" by the 30/35 h.p. six-cylinder Napier, undertaken in the autumn of 1913 under the official observation of the Royal Automobile Club. It is lavishly illustrated with photographs of the many picturesque beauty-spots passed during the fortnight's tour. Moreover, it contains no advertising matter whatever—a point which many will welcome as a novel and refreshing feature in motor-car manufacturers' literature. As a work of art, as well as a readable and instructive record of a memorable performance, it is of interest to everyone, motorist or otherwise. Messrs. Napier state that they will be pleased to send a copy to anyone free on application to 14, New Burlington Street, W.

Captain Stenson Cooke, the well-known and popular secretary of the Automobile Association and Motor Union, who upon the outbreak of war rejoined the colours with over 100 road patrols, now constituting two companies of the 8th (Cyclist) Battalion of the

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Essex Regiment, is assisting in the formation of another battalion, and makes a strong appeal for recruits to cyclists able and willing to serve their country. The work of a cyclist corps is specially interesting; all the necessary machines are provided free, and the pay is at Army rates, with the usual separation allowances to wives, children, and dependents. Intending recruits should apply to the headquarters of the Automobile Association, or to the City offices, Guildhall Annexe, Guildhall Yard, E.C. Particulars may also be obtained from the Pickwick Bicycle Club, 18, Eldon Street, London, E.C., or from the headquarters of the battalion, 17, St. Isaac's Walk, Colchester.

The City

RUMOURS which have been freely circulated during the week, but which are probably as unsubstantially based as most rumours, have had a rather depressing effect on City circles. There is talk of a serious naval battle in the North Sea, and there is some uncertainty as to what the submarines have been doing notwithstanding the official returns and the satisfactory, even handsome, profits which have come to the underwriters. Two departures have been made in connection with financial matters. One is the election of Lord Cunliffe for the third year as Governor of the Bank of England—a step which is wise because it assures continuity of policy while, of course, it is a recognition of Lord Cunliffe's high abilities as a financier in most critical times. The other departure is in connection with future issues of Treasury Bills. They will not, as hitherto, be offered in fixed amounts to be tendered for, but will be available at any time at fixed rates of discount on application to the Bank of England. The Money Market will watch the result of this experiment with great interest: the object is, of course, to assist a rise in the rates for money. Applications for the £15,000,000 Treasury Bills offered on Tuesday amounted to over £44,000,000.

On the Stock Exchange business is fairly good, all the circumstances considered, and first-class investment securities, with the War Loan at their head, are in some demand. No feature of particular interest presents itself in any of the markets, unless it be the reaction in Americans. Rubbers have shown less activity than of late; there has been some profit-taking and prices are generally rather easier. At the same time the speculative investor has his eye on the rubber market. The price of the raw commodity is remarkably good at 2s. 4d. and over, and the utmost confidence prevails that when the way to the Russian market through the Dardanelles has been opened there will come a big demand for rubber which must affect shares. The trouble is, as ever, that the public which wants to nibble cannot get shares at quoted prices. Take an instance within our knowledge. Pindenioya 2s. shares are quoted at 6d. They cannot be bought apparently for 9d., though they will not realise 6d. if they are offered. Pindenioya is known to have had a good year, and those who would like to average find it impossible to do so.

The Vickers report and dividend will not appear very encouraging to those who have gone nap on armament shares. It has, however, to be remembered that the profits are distributable on a capital increased by £1,100,000. The earnings are higher by some £100,000, but the extra dividends absorb over £137,000. Hence

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the maintenance of the 12½ per cent. dividend is not unsatisfactory; the amount to reserve is £50,000 less at £250,000, but the carry forward is increased by £6,000. Whilst, therefore, there is nothing in the Vickers report to justify the recent popularity of armament shares, there is on the other hand nothing to complain of.

To what extent the Elder Line will suffer in 1915 by the loss of the *Falaba* we cannot know. The report for last year is good. Net profit shows a fifty per cent. increase at £47,000. There is no increase in the dividend at 5 per cent., but £5,000 more is placed to reserve. When we think of the conditions which obtained during five months of 1914 it is a remarkable proof alike of the Company's enterprise and of the supremacy of the British Navy that the Elder should be able to produce so satisfactory a return.

Holders of Nigerian tin shares are probably quite prepared for such disappointing reports as that of the Anglo-Continental, whose shares two or three years ago were run up to £9 or £10. To-day they are worth about 8s. In 1913 a dividend of 10 per cent. was paid. For 1914 the shareholder gets nothing. There is a profit of £5,100; £12,000 was brought in, and when various allowances have been made there is a net balance of £4,800 to carry forward. Of course, the Anglo-Continental is not to blame for the market conditions which have made all tin mining propositions extremely difficult, but even if those conditions should undergo rapid improvement, it will surely be long before the public again rushes madly into Nigerian speculation.

Paquin Limited has been badly hit by the war. It reports a trading loss of over £36,000—or including directors' fees, etc., over £43,000—all its branches, apparently, except London, having suffered severely. The London house shows a fair profit, and preference shareholders may consider themselves fortunate that there was a balance in hand from 1913 which enabled the directors to pay their dividend. The reserve is to be drawn upon to the extent of £100,000 in order to meet the happily exceptional position in which the company finds itself.

CORRESPONDENCE

BRITISH ORCHESTRAL CONCERTS.

To the Editor of THE ACADEMY.

Sir,—May I draw the attention of your readers to the series of British orchestral concerts that I am giving at Queen's Hall on the afternoons of April 29, May 8, and May 29?

In this hour of crisis, when all the works of modern German composers should be set aside, the interests of the British public should be centred on the works of their native composers. In addition to works of musicians of established reputation, I intend including in my programme a certain proportion of compositions by musicians of the younger generation, being convinced that some young musician of great talent will be revealed, capable of voicing in his music the splendid national spirit that the war has quickened. Let us prove that concerts composed entirely of the orchestral works of British composers can be as attractive and as remunerative as those devoted to the works of the alien enemies. Any profits derived from these concerts will be devoted to the fund of the soldiers and sailors disabled by the war.

I earnestly appeal for the patronage and support of all those who love the music of Great Britain, and who be-

lieve, as I do, in its glorious future. I am, Sir, yours faithfully,

ISIDORE DE LARA.

War Emergency Entertainments,
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THE PRIME MINISTER AND "A MAN OF LETTERS."

To the Editor of THE ACADEMY.

Sir,—As I was not a contributor to the Robert Ross testimonial, though I have been working at books and literature for thirty years (I was not even asked to lend my name), I may perhaps be allowed without any suggestion of partisanship to congratulate THE ACADEMY on drawing attention to this quite extraordinary sample of log-rolling in high places.

Mr. Robert Ross, for all I know, may be a most estimable literary man. It is my misfortune that I only know him as the editor of another man's works. When one thinks of the students who contribute to the world's libraries books that are of undoubted value to everybody except the students themselves, one can only be amazed at the manner in which a Prime Minister and other distinguished people have rallied to Mr. Ross. Why? I fail to understand. I do not object so much to what has been done for Mr. Ross as to the neglect of others at least, shall we say, as deserving—Mrs. Chapman, to wit. Yours truly,

A MAN OF LETTERS.

WAS SOLENT LENT BY GREEK σωλήν?

To the Editor of THE ACADEMY.

Sir,—In the Greek-English Lexikon of Liddell and Scott, of which a new edition is much to be desired, we find that σωλήν means "a channel, gutter, pipe"; in the Modern Greek-English Dictionary by A. Kyriakides (Athens: 1909), that it survives in the sense of "pipe; tube; canal; duct." In considering the word *Solent*, as ending in the same way as *ancient* from *ancien*; *margent* (in former English, and still used in Scotland) from *margin*; *regiment* from *regimen*; *romant*, and *romaunt*, from *roman*; *tyrant* from *tyran*, *tyranno*; and other words of that sort, which have been borrowed from French, I thought that it might stand for σωλήν either as used by the early Hellenic navigators, or as a learned, ecclesiastical, medieval word, like βασιλεύς on the coins of our Saxon Kings. My *Aymon* has been accepted as new and probable by Mr. E. Sibree, M.A., Librarian of the University of Bristol; by the Revd. Dr. A. H. Sayce, of The Queen's College in Oxford; and by the Polyglot Dr. Henri Bourgeois, of the University of Gaunt, now a refugee at Folkestone, who writes: "Votre étymologie paraît en fait excellente, irréprochable." If any reader of THE ACADEMY knows of a better explanation of the word, will he be so good as to let us see it?

EDWARD S. DODGSON,

The Oxford Union Society.

April 8, 1915.

BOOKS RECEIVED

FICTION.

A Man With Nine Lives. By Richard Marsh. (Ward, Lock and Co. 6s.)

The Children of Alsace. By René Bazin. Reprint. (Greening and Co. 1s. net.)

- Tainted Gold.* By H. N. Williams. (S. Paul and Co. 6s.)
The Heiress of Swallowcliffe. By E. Everett-Green. (S. Paul and Co. 6s.)
Loneliness. By R. Hugh Benson. (Hutchinson and Co. 6s.)
The Courtship of Rosamond Fayre. By Berta Ruck. (Hutchinson and Co. 6s.)
Little Comrade: The Romance of a Lady Spy. By Burton E. Stevenson. (Hutchinson and Co. 6s.)
The Watchers by the Threshold, and Other Tales. By John Buchan. Reprint. (Wm. Blackwood and Sons. 1s. net.)
Private Spud-Tamson. By Captain R. W. Campbell. (Wm. Blackwood and Sons. 1s. net.)
Patricia. By E. H. Fowler. (G. P. Putnam's Sons. 6s.)
Lady Bridget in the Never-Never Land. By Mrs. Campbell Praed. (Hutchinson and Co. 6s.)
The Princess of Happy Chance. By Tom Gallon. (Hutchinson and Co. 6s.)
Accidentals. By Helen Mackay. (Andrew Melrose. 5s. net.)
The Herb of Healing. By G. B. Burgin. (Hutchinson and Co. 6s.)
A Bride of the Plains. By Baroness Orczy. (Hutchinson and Co. 6s.)
Meave. By Dorothea Conyers. (Hutchinson and Co. 6s.)
The Black Lake. By Sir W. Magnay, Bart. (S. Paul and Co. 6s.)
Miss Billy's Decision. By E. H. Porter. (S. Paul and Co. 6s.)

MISCELLANEOUS.

- Hugh: Memoirs of a Brother.* By A. C. Benson. Illustrated. (Smith, Elder and Co. 7s. 6d. net.)
The Spirit of Japanese Art. By Yone Noguchi. (John Murray. 2s. net.)
The Life and Teaching of W. H. Gillespie. By James Urquhart. (T. and T. Clark. 1s. net.)
Russian Realities. By John Hubback. (John Lane. 5s. net.)
A Chaplet of Herbs. By Florence Hine. (G. Routledge and Sons. 2s. 6d. net.)
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